

Message Text

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ACTION SCI-06

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ADP-00 RSC-01 RSR-01 CU-04 /023 W

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R 241232 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8547

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STADIS//////////

E O 11652: N/ A

TAGS: TGEN, IS

SUBJECT: US- ISRAEL BINATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION (BNF)

1. SCIENCE ATTACHE DISCUSSED BNF, PARTICULARLY ITEMS OF INTEREST FIRST SESSION BOARD OF GOVERNORS, WITH DR. ELIEZER TAL, DIRECTOR, NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (NCRD). AS HEAD SENIOR GOI AGENCY RESPONSIBLE OVERALL ISRAELI RESEARCH, TAL IS FOCAL POINT INITIATIVES TO PREPARE FORTHCOMING BNF SESSION AND SAYS HE SPEAKS FOR FIVE ISRAELI MEMBERS OF BOARD. FOLLOWING POINTS MADE:

(A) ELECTION CHAIRMAN BOARD OF GOVERNORS: TAL DELIGHTED DR. STEVER MAY BE PREVAILED UPON ACCEPT CHAIRMANSHIP FOR PERIOD ENDING BOARD SESSION JANUARY 1974 ALTHOUGH HE WOULD HAVE PREFERRED DR. STEVER COULD ACCEPT LONGER TERM. SCIATT POINTED OUT AND TAL UNDERSTOOD DESIRABILITY OPERATE BNF ON CALENDAR YEAR BASIS AND DIFFICULTY DR. STEVER ASSUMING LONG TERM COMMITMENT BOARD CHAIRMANSHIP DUE TO OTHER AND INCREASING WORK PRESSURES IN WASHINGTON.

(B) ELECTION VICE- CHAIRMAN BOARD OF GOVERNORS: TAL STATED ISRAELIS WILL PROPOSE PROFESSOR ERNST D. BERGMANN AS VICE- CHAIRMAN.

(C) APPOINTMENT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: TAL STATED GOI CONTINUES BELIEVE IT IMPORTANT EFFICIENCY OF OPERATION BNF THAT DIRECTOR, NCRD, BE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BNF.

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CONSIDERING INTENSE COMPETITION FOR RESEARCH SUPPORT AMONGST ISRAELI RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO FIND OTHER SUITABLE ISRAELI SCIENCE ADMINISTRATOR WITH REQUIRED OBJECTIVITY. ACCORDING TO TAL, GOI HAD THIS INTERNAL COMPETITIVENESS VERY MUCH IN MIND WHEN IN THE COURSE OF FORMALLY APPROVING THE BNF AGREEMENT, IT CONCLUDED THAT THE DIRECTOR OF NCRD SHOULD SERVE ALSO AS THE BNF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION WHETHER HE WOULD BE PREPARED TAKE LEAVE OF ABSENCE AS DIRECTOR NCRD FOR PERIOD OF SIX MONTHS IN ORDER DEVOTE FULL TIME ORGANIZATION AND INITIAL OPERATION BNF, TAL STATED HE COULD NOT TAKE LEAVE OF ABSENCE. HE ADDED THAT IN HIS OPINION IT WAS IMPORTANT FOR BNF PRESTIGE THAT DIRECTOR NCRD QUA DIRECTOR SERVE AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BNF. HE CONVINCED THAT WITH FULL TIME DEPUTY, DIRECTOR NCRD COULD NOT ONLY DO PROPER JOB AS BNF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BUT COULD SET BNF OPERATION INTO MOTION IMMEDIATELY UPON ARRIVAL BY BOARD OF GOVERNORS AT JUNE SESSION USING NCRD ADMINISTRATIVE FACILITIES UNTIL SUCH TIME AS BNF ADMINISTRATION ESTABLISHED.

SCIATT POINTED OUT THAT OBJECTIVITY COULD POSSIBLY BE OBTAINED BY APPOINTING AMERICAN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR. TAL AGREED THIS POSSIBLE UNDER AGREEMENT BUT EMPHASIZED VALUABLE TIME WOULD BE LOST RECRUITING SUITABLE AMERICAN CANDIDATE AND FURTHER HE MOST LIKELY WOULD BE UNACQUAINTED WITH ISRAELI SCIENCE AND ISRAELI ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES. TAL INDICATED THAT SINCE GOI APPROVAL BNF AGREEMENT BASED ON ASSUMPTION DIRECTOR NCRD WOULD BE BNF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MATTER MAY HAVE TO BE REFERRED BACK TO GOI IF THIS ARRANGEMENT NOT POSSIBLE, WITH POSSIBILITY POSTPONEMENT DATE FIRST BOARD MEETING. SINCE THIS IS FIRST TIME EMBASSY HAS HEARD THIS CAVEAT, EMBASSY CHECKED TAL'S STATEMENT WITH AGMON, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, MINISTRY OF FINANCE, WHO CONFIRMED, AND WHO EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT USG COULD SUPPORT GOI POSITION AT LEAST ON A TRIAL BASIS.

(D) REGULATIONS: TAL SAID GOI APPROVES DRAFT REGULATIONS IN GENERAL BUT SUGGESTS TWO CHANGES (1) TO OBTAIN THE ADVICE OF THE TECHNICAL REVIEW PANELS WHEREVER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POSSIBLE BY CORRESPONDENCE (2) TO "CONSIDER" RATHER THAN "GIVE PREFERENCE"
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2. TAL SUGGESTS ALL MEETINGS TWO- DAY SESSION BNF BOARD, JUNE 25-26 BE HELD AT IMPRESSIVE PREMISES ISRAEL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES IN JERUSALEM AND EMBASSY RECOMMENDS AGREEMENT. MINISTER OF FINANCICE PINHAS SAPIR WILL MOST LIKELY OPEN FIRST MEETING. ISRAELIS PLAN RECEPTION FIRST EVENING AND EMBASSY PLANS DINNER SECOND EVENING. EMBASSY SUGGESTS AMERICAN BOARD MEMBERS STAY JERUSALEM HOTEL AND HAS MADE RESERVATIONS FOUR SINGLES FOR STEVER, SENSER, SCHAEFER, AND SPIEGEL AND ONE DOUBLE FOR POLLACK AT KING DAVID HOTEL. PLEASE CONFIRM.

3. IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE V OF BNF AGREEMENT, THE BOARD " MAY AUTHORIZE PAYMENT OF NECESSARY EXPENSES OF MEMBERS ATTENDING MEETINGS OF BOARD AND IN PERFORMING OTHER OFFICIAL DUTIES". TAL INTENDS ARRANGE SEPARATE CAR FOR EACH BOARD MEMBER, THE COST FOR WHICH WILL BE PAID BY FOUNDATION UPON BOARD APPROVAL. SO FAR AS TRAVEL TO AND FROM US OF AMERICAN BOARD MEMBERS IS CONCERNED, EMBASSY RECOMMENDS DEPT AUTHORIZE EMBASSY REQUEST LOCAL TWA OFFICE, IN WRITING, ISSUE NECESSARY FIRST- CLASS ROUND- TRIP TICKETS TO AMERICAN BOARD MEMBERS WITH UNDERSTANDING PAYMENT WILL BE MADE TO TWA BY FOUNDATION UPON APPROVAL BY BOARD AT ITS FIRST SESSION.

4. EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS TAL WILL ORGANIZE DETAILED

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ITINERARY TO SATISFY INDIVIDUAL WISHES AMERICAN BOARD MEMBERS.

5. EMBASSY HOPES BOARD OF GOVERNORS CAN OPERATE IN OPEN SPIRIT OF GIVE- AND- TAKE TO EXEMPLIFY SPIRIT OF MUTUAL COOPERATION CITED AS OBJECTIVE OF AGREEMENT. MOST

IMPORTANT TASK AT FIRST MEETING WILL BE TO ESTABLISH SPIRIT OF COOPERATION AND TO PROVIDE FOR ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE THAT WILL MAINTAIN THIS SPIRIT. AMERICAN MEMBERS OF BOARD WILL WISH TO FORM CLEAR VIEW OF US INTEREST IN PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS, AND BE PREPARED TO DEFEND LINES OF RESEARCH OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO US AND TO BE CRITICAL OF ISRAELI SUGGESTIONS IN AREAS OF LITTLE US INTEREST. AT SAME TIME, OPEN AND FRIENDLY APPROACH SHOULD MAKE IT POSSIBLE FIND LINES ENDEAVOR THAT WILL FLOWER FROM COOPERATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH.

6. EMBASSY CONTINUS BELIEVE PREFEREABLE HAVE FULL- TIME EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR. CONSIDERING THAT HIGHER GOI AUTHORITY CONFIRMS WHAT TAL HAS SAID, NAMELY THAT DIRECTOR NCRD SERVE AS BNF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR IN ORDER GUARANTEE OBJECTIVITY AND PRESTIGE, EMB BELIEVES ADVISABLE AMERICAN BOARD MEMBERS ACCEPT APPOINTMENT DIRECTOR NCRD, I. E. TAL, AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BUT WITH PROVISIO THAT THIS BE ON TRIAL BASIS WITH MORE DEFINITIVE ACTION TO BE TAKEN AT SECOND SESSION OF BOARD JANUARY 1974. WITH TAL AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, EMBASSY RECOMMENDS AMERICAN MEMBERS OF BOARD INSIST ONE DEPUTY DIRECTOR SHOULD BE AMERICAN CITIZEN. THERE ARE NUMBER HEBREW- SPEAKING AMERICAN CITIZENS, HOLDING DUAL NATIONALITY, RESIDENT IN ISRAEL WHO COULD QUALIFY.
ZURHELLEN

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